



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

May 8, 2014

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

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Third District

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Fifth District

SACRAMENTO UPDATE

Executive Summary

This memorandum contains a report on the following:

- **Pursuit of County Position to Oppose AB 1975 (Hernández).** This measure would require a local emergency medical services agency that implements a trauma care system to commission an independent nonprofit organization or a governmental entity qualified to assess trauma systems to conduct a comprehensive assessment of equitability and access to the system, on a regional basis, at least once every five years, in coordination with the regional trauma coordinating committee (RTCC) for that area, and would require local EMS agencies to incorporate the recommendations made by RTCCs as a result of the assessment into their respective trauma care plan. The bill would also require the State Emergency Medical Services Authority to develop a statewide trauma plan that addresses all aspects of trauma care including, but not limited to, a statewide plan for trauma in the case of bioterrorism, natural disasters, mass casualties, and access to trauma care for rural and urban communities. Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with existing policy to oppose any abridgement or elimination of the Board of Supervisors' powers and duties, and to oppose proposals that reduce county medical control over local EMS providers, **the Sacramento advocates will oppose AB 1975.**

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

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Pursuit of County Position on Legislation

AB 1975 (Hernández), which as amended on May 7, 2014 would: 1) require a local emergency medical services (EMS) agency that implements a trauma care system to commission an independent nonprofit organization or a governmental entity qualified to assess trauma systems to conduct a comprehensive assessment of equitability and access to the system, on a regional basis, at least once every five years, in coordination with the regional trauma coordinating committee (RTCC) for that area; 2) authorize subsequent assessments on a more frequent basis to determine the results of the initial assessment; 3) allow RTCCs to make recommendations to local emergency medical services agencies and to the State EMS Authority (Authority); and 4) require local EMS agencies to incorporate the recommendations into their respective trauma care plan and to submit the revised plan to the Authority for approval. The bill would provide a \$500,000 appropriation from the State General Fund to the Authority to implement a data collection system for conducting the assessments. AB 1975 would also require the Authority to develop a statewide trauma plan that addresses all aspects of trauma care including, but not limited to, a statewide plan for trauma in the case of bioterrorism, natural disasters, mass casualties, and access to trauma care for rural and urban communities, and to provide the Legislature with a report on the status of the plan by March 31, 2015.

Background

County-opposed AB 1357 (Hernández) of 2013 would have required County Measure B funds collected from properties in the San Gabriel Valley to remain within that region for medical and trauma services to reduce ambulance diversion. In addition, the bill would have established a task force to study and audit County Measure B funds collected from properties in the San Gabriel Valley since the passage of the Measure. On April 30, 2013, at the request of the author, AB 1357 was held in the Assembly Health Committee. Thereby, the bill failed to pass out of its house of origin by the January 31, 2014 deadline.

In lieu of moving AB 1357 forward, Assembly Member Hernández submitted a request to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee (JLAC) for an audit of the County's allocation and management of Measure B funds for the period from 2008 through 2012. As reported in the June 5, 2013 Sacramento Update, JLAC approved the audit request which was conducted by the State Auditor.

On February 20, 2014, the State Auditor released its report and recommendations of the audit. Among its recommendations, the State Auditor recommended that, in order to evaluate whether its trauma system is appropriately designed and serving the needs

of residents in underserved areas and the needs of the most at-risk populations, the Board of Supervisors should use Measure B funds to engage the American College of Surgeons (ACS) to conduct a comprehensive assessment on the use of these funds.

In response to the State Auditor's recommendation, the Department of Health Services (DHS) noted that all designated trauma centers in Los Angeles County are routinely evaluated by the ACS to verify the quality of trauma care and to ensure that processes are in place to provide timely care. DHS also reported that all directors at the existing 14 trauma centers are Surgical Fellows of the American College of Surgeons. In addition, representatives from the ACS Committee on Trauma serve as members of the County's Trauma Hospital Advisory Committee. DHS concluded that it will discuss and evaluate whether additional information could be gained from conducting a study with the ACS.

County Impact

As amended on May 7, 2014, AB 1975 would implement an element of the State Auditor's recommendation by requiring all local emergency medical services agencies that implement a trauma care system to commission an entity to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the trauma care system at least once every five years in conjunction with the RTCC for that area. Subsequent assessments may be made on a more frequent basis to determine the results of the initial assessment. The bill would also require the State Emergency Medical Services Authority to develop a statewide trauma plan.

According to the Department of Health Services, counties planning to implement a trauma system currently consult with the ACS as Los Angeles County did in 1983. In addition, the ACS conducts a review of the County's hospitals every three years. DHS notes that requiring a comprehensive assessment of a trauma system by another entity as required under AB 1975 would not be beneficial. DHS indicates that this data is currently available for evaluation in the Emergency Management System Agency Trauma Plan and in annual updates which the County is required to submit to the Authority. DHS also reports that the Authority is in the final stages of preparing a statewide EMS Trauma Plan which is being developed by experts in the field. The objective of the statewide plan is to create an inclusive statewide trauma system that provides standardized trauma care for all Californians. The Plan will address universal access to services, delineation of minimum standards of care, guidelines for trauma center designation, data collection requirements, system evaluation quality management, and funding mechanisms.

The Department of Health Services reports that there are five RTCCs in California. The RTCCs are informal groups composed of volunteers including: trauma surgeons, program managers, and local emergency medical services administrators within each region who meet ad hoc to discuss common interests between counties. DHS notes that AB 1975 would create a new regional assessment which would be a redundant, burdensome, and an expensive process with uncertain value given the vast geographic differences between the regions. Los Angeles County is in Region IV-South/West which includes Orange, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties. These counties vary widely in population density, topography, resources, and trauma care service needs. According to DHS, AB 1975 would allow RTCCs to impose new mandates on the County's EMS agency unrelated to the County's specific trauma needs. This could deconstruct and decentralize the County's current trauma care system which has taken decades to develop and implement.

County Counsel notes that currently, local EMS agencies manage and administer trauma systems in accordance with State and county regulations and oversight. AB 1975 would give RTCCs new authority to impose mandates on local EMS agencies and their trauma systems, thereby undermining and fragmenting local control. Also, given the fact that RTCCs are not defined anywhere in statute or regulation, AB 1975 is flawed and would cede local control to an undefined entity which lacks enforcement authority.

This office and the Department of Health Services oppose AB 1975 because it would significantly undermine the Board's authority over the County's trauma system which is designed to meet the unique and specific needs of the County's 10 million residents. Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with existing policy to oppose any abridgement or elimination of the Board of Supervisors' powers and duties, and to oppose proposals that reduce county medical control over local EMS providers, **the Sacramento advocates will oppose AB 1975.**

AB 1975 is supported by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. This measure is opposed by: the California State Association of Counties; California Hospital Association; Emergency Medical Services Administrators Association of California; Emergency Medical Directors Association of California; California Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians; and the San Joaquin County Health Care Services Agency.

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AB 1975 passed the Assembly Health Committee by a vote of 11 to 6 on May 6, 2014. This measure now proceeds to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

We will continue to keep you advised.

WTF:RA
MR:VE:ma

c: All Department Heads
Legislative Strategist
Local 721
Coalition of County Unions
California Contract Cities Association
Independent Cities Association
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City Managers Associations
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